

TASK FORCE SAFETY OFFICER

August 29, 2003

a. Position Description

The Task Force Safety Officer is responsible for monitoring and assessing the safety aspects of the Task Force during incident operations. The Task Force Safety Officer reports directly to the TFL.

The Task Force Safety Officer is responsible for:

- Overseeing all health and safety aspects of the Task Force response and the fitness and welfare of Task Force personnel;
 - ◊ This includes the personnel safety at the Assembly Point, in transit vehicles used during transit, at layover sites, the mobilization center, at the BoO, and the operational work sites. It also includes patient safety.
 - ◊ All roles will be evaluated to assure that optimal safety and injury prevention is being practiced at all times. This is particularly important for camp set-up and function, respiratory and other protective equipment at the work sites, safe operation of motor vehicles and tools and other considerations.
 - ◊ In cooperation with the Medical Team Manager, investigating, completing, and forwarding all reports in regards to Task Force personnel injuries and illnesses to the appropriate organization in conjunction with the IST Unit Leader;
- Preventing injuries and illnesses among the Task Force;
- Immediate intervention of activities to prevent the loss of life and prevention of injuries;
- Preparing and maintaining entry permits, records and reports;
- Developing and implementing the safety component of the Task Force Tactical Plan;
- Performing additional tasks or duties as assigned during a mission;
- Providing accountability, maintenance, and minor repairs for all issued equipment; and
- Adhering to all safety procedures.

b. Position Requirements and Criteria:

Individuals who meet the following requirements and criteria will be eligible to become Task Force Safety Officers in the DHS/FEMA US&R Response System. The intent of these requirements is to select functional managers capable of effectively managing and supervising the safety function in the urban disaster environment. The requirements and criteria for the position are identified in the following categories:

- Knowledge

- Skills
- Abilities.

Knowledge:

The Task Force Safety Officer must have:

- Completed the NIIMS Basic ICS Course (I-200), or equivalent;
- An awareness of public health and industrial hygiene considerations;
- Knowledge of field sanitation procedures;
- Knowledge of First Responder Operations Level for Hazardous Materials as per OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.120, Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response;
- A basic awareness of the applicable OSHA standards;
- Knowledge of the principles of risk management;
- Completed a basic training course in the disciplines outlined in NFPA 1670, Operations and Training for Technical Rescue incidents;
- A working knowledge of confined space operations as outlined in the OSHA Standard 29 CFR 1910.146, Permit Required Confined Spaces;
- Completed a basic incident safety officer's training course, in accordance with NFPA 1521, Fire Department Safety Officer (1992); and
- Completed a basic training course in incident management stress.

Skills:

See general requirements.

Abilities:

The Task Force Safety Officer must:

- Be able to analyze data; and
- Be able to effectively communicate orally and in writing.

c. Operational Checklist

The purpose of this checklist is to define the duties and responsibilities of the Task Force Safety Officer during a mission assignment. The list is intended to be a general summary of actions. It should be understood that:

- Some required actions may not be listed, but must be identified and assumed by this position;

- Some actions may be the primary responsibility of another Task Force position, but may require assistance and coordination from this position; and
- The actions are listed in a general chronological order, but may require deviation.

(1) Upon Activation/At Task Force Assembly Point:

- Conduct a work place walk-through assessment for hazards and safety practices;
- Ensure a personnel accountability system is in place;
- Review personal, team, and specialized equipment checklist;
- Coordinate with the Medical Section in establishing proper reporting procedures for all illnesses and injuries during the activation;
- Verify adequate team medical evaluation of deploying members;
- Review Task Force plans for the specific incident relating to safety;
- Ensure that adequate appropriate personal protective equipment is used; and
- Evaluate safety considerations in all Task Force planning sessions.

(2) At Point of Departure:

- Ensure accountability is maintained;
- Ensure adequate medical coverage;
- Review safety procedures appropriate for the type of transportation mode;
- Ensure proper nourishment and hydration for the Task Force;
- Ensure that appropriate personal protective equipment is used; and
- Monitor the well being of Task Force personnel during any delays.

(3) In Transit:

- Ensure accountability is maintained;
- Ensure that appropriate personal protective equipment is used;
- Provide adequate time for rest and rehabilitation;
- Review safety considerations with the Task Force members;
- Monitor safety requirements while in transit;
- Update preliminary safety plan to include environmental conditions; and

- Attend Task Force management meetings and planning sessions as they are conducted.

(4) Arrival at Mobilization Center:

- Ensure accountability is maintained;
- Review emergency signaling and evacuation procedures;
- Ensure that appropriate personal protective equipment is used;
- Observe personnel and equipment off-loading to identify safety hazards;
- Observe conditions at the mobilization center for safety issues (i.e., staging, sleeping areas, hygiene, traffic patterns); and
- Ensure each functional group has reviewed the structural/triage, assessment marking system.

(5) On-Site Operations:

The effectiveness of a Task Force is incumbent upon proper health and safety procedures being established, followed, and enforced. The Task Force Safety Officer will use the following checklist to promote safety and welfare in the Task Force Base of Operations and at Operational Work Sites. Each consideration applies equally to the BoO and Operational Work Site.

- Ensure accountability is maintained;
- Develop and implement daily health and safety plans which address:
 - ◊ Sanitation
 - ◊ Hygiene
 - ◊ Evacuation and Assembly Points
 - ◊ Proper level of Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)
 - ◊ Decontamination procedure
 - ◊ Operations to determine safe practices
 - ◊ Work/rest cycles
 - ◊ Climatic condition monitoring
 - ◊ Fire protection monitoring at all locations;
- Coordinate with Logistics Specialist and Medical Team to ensure an adequate food preparation protocol is established that includes use of thermometers, cover, diet, cooking and cooling, storage, and ventilation (following the guidelines for certified food handlers);
- Coordinate with the Medical Team Manager for biological waste reporting protocol;
- Ensure that appropriate measures are taken to report and mitigate dangers of stray animals, rodents, reptiles, infectious disease vectors, and hazardous materials;

- Ensure that adequate lighting is provided to the BoO and Operational Work Sites;
- Investigate each injury and illness and ensure appropriate documentation is completed; and
- Interview off-going shifts to assess developing hazards, safety problems, and injuries.

(6) Reassignment / Demobilization:

- Ensure accountability is maintained;
- Notify the Logistics Specialist of the loss or potential maintenance requirements of any assigned tools and equipment; and
- Ensure that necessary follow-up care for Task Force members has been arranged.